

CoVF UPDATE

JANUARY – SEPTEMBER 2007

The Council on Virginia's Future currently has a number of initiatives underway. This update highlights some of these recent activities involving information and education, recognition and awards, and the business climate survey.

Information and Education

Presentations and contacts with key public and private sector audiences about the Council on Virginia's Future, performance management and accountability, and *Virginia Performs* are ongoing. Highlights of recent contacts include:

- Cabinet Community Days in the Southside, Eastern and Roanoke regions
- Members of the Virginia General Assembly, who received custom data reports for their communities
- Chiefs of Staff at the National Governors Association
- Virginia Museum of Fine Arts (Trustees Government Affairs Committee)
- Sorensen Institute for Political Leadership
- Virginia Workforce Council
- *LEAD* Virginia
- Hampton Roads Partnership (Executive Committee)
- Association of State and Territorial Healthcare Officials (ASTHO)
- National Association of State Personnel Executives (NASPE)
- Virginia Society for Human Resource Management
- Other states: Georgia, Florida, New York and Washington
- Other countries: Scotland and Germany.

In the near future, presentations are planned for:

- International City/County Management Association (ICMA) 93rd Annual Conference
- *Governing Magazine*: Managing Performance 2007
- *Holyrood* conference on public sector reform in Edinburgh, Scotland.

Initial communications and marketing strategies are being developed to promote the work of the Council on Virginia's Future to targeted audiences. Two newsletters are being developed, one discussing *Virginia Performs* and the second reporting on the full range of activities of the Council.

Media Interest, Recognition and Awards

In June, the *Virginia Performs* website was selected as a **finalist for a 2007 Intergovernmental Solutions Awards**, presented by the American Council for Technology (ACT).

The Council on Virginia's Future has also been selected as the recipient of the **2007 Digital Government Achievement Award** in the Government to Citizen State category for *Virginia Performs*. A formal announcement will be made later in September.

Jane Kusiak has been appointed to the advisory board of the Center for State Government Transformation.

The Council has garnered significant media coverage, especially immediately following the official launch of *Virginia Performs* on January 3, 2007. Highlights include:

- Governor Kaine's interview on *WHFK-FM 106.7, The Business of Government Hour*, sponsored by the IBM Center for The Business of Government
- Interviews with *WAMU*, Washington, DC and ABC 13 News (*WSET*, Lynchburg, VA)
- Sorensen Institute podcast
- *Bacon's Rebellion (online)*: Doug Koelemay article "Transparency and Truthiness"
- *Richmond Times-Dispatch*: lead editorial commending the *Virginia Performs* initiative
- *PA Times* (American Society for Public Administration): John Kamensky, senior fellow with the IBM Center for The Business of Government, said: "The new governor, Tim Kaine, seems to have set a new bar for performance leadership!"
- *Governing.com* (online) lead article
- *Virginia Capitol Connections*, "Performance Management," by Governor Kaine.

Business Climate Survey

- The first phase of the Business Climate Survey, commissioned by the Council, has been completed. Teams from Virginia Commonwealth University and the University of Virginia conducted interviews with a sample of 40 executives and eight economic developers from across Virginia, followed by the distribution of a pilot survey.
- A summary of first-round results from these interviews was presented to 10 leaders from the Health and Human Resources, Education, and Commerce and Trade secretariats. The purpose was to ensure that the leadership team was aware of the survey and to solicit their input on the specific issues to be covered in the survey.
- Follow-up interviews were conducted with workforce services staff from the Community College System and the Department of Business Assistance, and two focus groups were convened in May, one each for executives of small and large businesses. The feedback from these focus groups was used to modify the pilot survey.
- In both the interviews and the pilot survey, there was substantial agreement on the most important factors affecting Virginia's business climate: workforce quality, followed by K-12 education, healthcare, and quality of life.
- Final results will be available in December 2007, following a much broader distribution of the survey. Final survey results will give a more comprehensive reading of all key business climate issues, including:
 - quality ratings of the various climate components
 - perceptions of how state government is doing in promoting the business climate in Virginia and
 - an overall assessment of Virginia's business climate.

These results will be available by region, size of business and line of business.

Summary

The Council on Virginia's Future strives to keep business, government and citizens informed about all of its initiatives -- from refining and expanding *Virginia Performs* to gauging Virginia's business climate to improving productivity, accountability and service within state agencies.